

WINTER EDITION
FEBRUARY 2020

VA Boston Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service Newsletter

PM&RS Offers the First Home-based LED Treatment Program for Veterans with TBI and PTSD.

Dr. Yelena Bogdanova, LED TBI Program

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VA Boston PM&RS established the first LED TBI Clinic at Jamaica Plain Campus two years ago, in November 2017. This month, the LED TBI Clinic provided the LED treatment to the **130th** Veteran since the inception of the LED Home Treatment Program.

Earlier this month, the LED TBI Home Treatment Program was recognized as VHA Innovative Health Care solution and was selected for presentation at the VHA Innovation Experience (iEx) Event at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. At the VHA iEx Event we had the opportunity to present the LED Program and to demonstrate our contribution to the innovative health care solutions to VA leadership, frontline employees, and the public.

The LED Home Treatment Program is the first program in the US that provides advanced neuromodulation treatment using light-emitting diodes (LED) for the Veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and PTSD. LED therapy is a non-invasive, non-pharmacological treatment that promotes healing of injured brain cells and improves

cellular function. LED therapy improves attention and concentration, improves sleep, and reduces PTSD symptoms in Veterans with TBI.

The LED Program provides 12-Week LED Home Treatment with tele-health support for Veterans with chronic TBI and related neuropsychiatric symptoms, such as PTSD and sleep disturbance.

The LED TBI Clinic services include clinical evaluation, individualized treatment plan, in-office LED treatment and training, and follow up visits. To ensure the quality of home treatment and to further reduce the burden of travel, the LED Clinic provides "Tele-Health" support and "VideoConnect" follow up visits.

The LED Home Treatment Program, sponsored by the VACO Center for Compassionate Care Innovation (CCI), supports the VA mission to make advanced clinical care accessible and convenient for Veterans. The LED TBI Home Treatment Program complements other PM&RS and Mental Health services for Veterans with multiple injuries, TBI, and PTSD. The LED Clinic Providers, Dr. Yelena Bogdanova (Clinical Lead and LED Treatment specialist) and Dr. Karina Gilbert, (Tele-health specialist) are licensed clinical neuropsychologists with expertise in TBI, PTSD, and sleep.

For more information regarding the LED TBI Home Treatment Program contact the LED Program Clinical Lead, Dr. Yelena Bogdanova at: Yelena.Bogdanova@va.gov

Special thanks for the Program support provided by Lola Baird, LICSW.



Dr. Bogdanova demonstrates the LED treatment device.

Pet Therapy Program West Roxbury Inpatient Bldg 2 Wards Meet Boomer



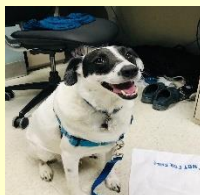
In conjunction with VA Boston's Pet Therapy Program, which is run under the auspices of the Recreation Therapy Department; PM&RS has their own Pet Therapy Dog, Boomer.

Boomer and his mom, Randi Woodrow, PT, visits with Veterans 2 Sundays per month. The goals of Pet Therapy are to improve socialization, improve mood, improve or maintain upper body motor skills and to reduce apathy by improving willingness to participate in a small group and remain alert and engaged.

For a dog to be accepted into the Pet Therapy program, he or she must maintain certification from an accredited organization and be in good health. Boomer received his Canine Good Citizenship Certification from the AKC in 2018. Boomer has been providing pet therapy visits to Veterans on A1 and A2 since January 2019.

Boomer, a Labrador/Border Collie/Heinz 57 mix is a sweet, mellow boy who specializes in snuggling and cuddling with Veterans, family members and staff.

He enjoys being hugged and pet and will do almost anything for a treat. His specialty is meeting Veterans who may be ambivalent about receiving pet therapy visits, he almost always wins them over with his sweet personality and gentle smile.



PM&RS Services at VA Boston

A Quick Overview

Physiatry: Our Physiatrists, or rehabilitation physicians, are nerve, muscle, and bone experts that treat injuries or illnesses that affect how patients' move. There are roughly four Physiatrists working in the PM&R Service at VA Boston, across the three campuses

Physical Therapy: Our PTs are dedicated in helping reduce pain and improve or restore mobility. There are over 30 PTs and three Physical Therapist Assistants that cover all three campuses and the Lowell Outpatient Clinic.

Occupational Therapy: Our OTs treat injured, ill, or disabled patients through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. There are over 15 OTs dispersed throughout all three campuses.

Kinesiotherapy: Our KT's are here to help evaluate and treat patients' mobility, strength, and endurance. There are two KT's and one Kinesiotherapy Assistant across the three campuses.

Driver Training: Our driver training program, overseen by the Occupational Therapy Department, is designed to give patients a plan to modify their driving skills based on need. They work with a variety of medical conditions that include, but are not limited to, amputation, stroke, and spinal cord injury.

Wheelchair Clinic: Wheelchair clinic offers a comprehensive evaluation process to provide patients with the most appropriate wheelchair and seating option that will improve their access to home and community.

Inpatient Acute Rehabilitation program at West Roxbury Campus: An interdisciplinary inpatient rehabilitation program for Veterans with medical, neurological, orthopedic, cardiac, and vascular conditions. This 5 bed inpatient program is located at the West Roxbury Campus. This program is formally called the Comprehensive Integrated Inpatient Rehabilitation Program and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Admission Criteria includes:

- Onset of injury, medical or surgical event resulting in the need (in at least two therapeutic disciplines, e.g. physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, pain management, wound care, and/or cognitive rehabilitation) for rehabilitation was within the past ninety days unless complicating factors exist.
- Veteran has specific functional improvement goals with a projected time frame;
- Veteran is medically stable for at least 24 hours and can actively and safely participate in the rehabilitation program (2-3 hours daily; 6-7 days per week);
- Veteran agrees to participate in rehabilitation and;
- Discharge setting is either to prehospital living setting or alternative living options have been identified with necessary support systems in place.

If you are interested in this program, please contact **Michelle Remsen**, Social Worker: [\(857\) 203-6112](tel:(857) 203-6112)

PM&RS Services

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INPATIENT SERVICES

West Roxbury
Inpatient
Rehabilitation
Department
(857) 203-5117

OUTPATIENT PM&R CLINICS

West Roxbury
(857) 203-5117

Jamaica Plain
(857) 364-4964

Brockton
(774) 826-3124

Lowell
(978) 671-9000



The PM&RS Outpatient Veterans Signals Survey

Comments compiled from va.voice.medallia.com

09/06/2019-10/15/2019

- I am very new to the VA system after a little bit of a rocky start finding my way around the system, I am now very impressed with my experiences with all the different departments. The thing that impressed me the most is how kind compassionate and professional everyone is. (BR Conley)
- I am very happy with the physical therapy staff and their attention to my needs, especially Joe Thilman who has been very effective in identifying and working on my problem hip which originally, I thought was my back (WX Thilman)
- All of my experience with the VA health appointments have been good. (BR Capps)
- I would just like to say that I have found currently the VA Medical Center(s) are in my opinion very organized and efficient. The providers that I have encountered are very knowledgeable and personable. I am extremely pleased with the care that I have received through the VA Medical System. Thank you! (BR Sullivan)
- Ease of contact, fast, quick and confirmation by text is great. (PT WX)
- After 2 months of OT for an arm injury, my symptoms have not improved. My OT contacted the chief doc to request an MRI. He approved, but then I was told I was referred to another doctor for treatment, except that doctor is only in the hospital on Tuesdays, which my schedule does not allow. I am struggling to make appointments because of school. I've had the injury for a year. Please give me an MRI (OT Pappas)
- I have Parkinson's disease and this review describes an intensive physical therapy at the West Roxbury VA to improve my balance, strength and coordination. It's been strenuous due, in part to my age (83), but it has also been an extremely beneficial thanks to my physical therapist Lindsey Beattie and to receptionists Patricia and Dorothy. My balance hasn't been this good for at least 10 years. (WX Beatty)

PM&RS New Staff Fall 2019

Advanced MSA



Jeanne Regis JP

Advanced MSA



Yendry (Jen-dree) Chacon

Happy Halloween
from PMRS
BROCKTON



October Is National Physical Therapy Month! Meet the VA Boston Physical Therapy Department

West Roxbury Campus



Jessica Allen, Outpatient Spinal Cord Injury Physical Therapist:

Jessica has been part of the rehab team at the West Roxbury Campus since 2010. She started at the VA as a student in 2008, loved working with the Veterans, and knew she wanted to return upon graduation from physical therapy school at Simmons University. When Jessica graduated in 2010, she joined the inpatient rehab team at the West Roxbury Campus where she provided care to patients in all the different inpatient settings. In 2015, she transitioned to the outpatient setting to establish an outpatient physical therapy program for the Spinal Cord Injury Service. Jessica is a Board-Certified Neurological Clinical Specialist. She works part time assisting Veterans with neurological conditions to live their best life. Jessica also serves as a mentor and curriculum coordinator for the Physical Therapy Neurologic Residency Program. She is passionate about serving Veterans and wants to do the best she can to give back for all the sacrifice the Veterans have made.

Jessica Allen PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Neurological Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs 730-4PM



Lindsay Beatty, Physical Therapist, Neurologic Physical Therapy Resident at VA Boston:

Lindsay received her Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Ithaca College in 2016 and worked at an inpatient rehabilitation hospital for two years before deciding to pursue further specialization in the area of neurologic physical therapy here at the VA Boston Healthcare System. During her residency program, Lindsay has had the opportunity to rotate through acute care, inpatient and spinal cord injury rehab, and outpatient PT, and has greatly enjoyed working with and learning from all the excellent PTs and OTs in each of these departments. After completing her residency program in November 2019, Lindsay hopes to go on to find a job working in the VA Healthcare System in order to continue to serve our Veterans.

Lindsay Beatty PT, DPT Physical Therapist, Neurological PT Resident
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 730-4PM Available until Nov 18, 2019



Barbara Brintnall, Physical Therapist Assistant, Spinal Cord Injury Service:

Barbara joined the VA in 2011 as the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) on the Spinal Cord Injury Unit (A-2) at the West Roxbury Campus. Although she spends most of her time on SCI, she also assists at the Brockton Campus in Building 4, Community Living Center. Barbara received her Degree from Massasoit Community College and has 20 years of work experience. Prior to becoming a PTA, she received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Literature and History with a minor in Secondary Education. She has worked in a variety of settings prior to working for the VA, including: institutional care for adult developmentally delayed individuals with complex medical histories, subacute skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities and out-patient clinics with assorted specialty focuses. She is Graston certified and Rock Tape certified. Additionally, she takes 1-2 full time PTA students per year and enjoys assisting with the demonstration and teaching of several of the manual techniques for many of the PT students as well. Outside of work, she donates her time to volunteering both here at the hospital, occasionally with her family, and to the Wollomonuppoag Indian Council. This allows her to assist with extending an invitation to our in-patient vets to experience a New England style Powwow with the aid of the Recreation Departments of both the Brockton and West Roxbury Campuses.

Barbara Brintnall, PTA Physical Therapist Assistant
Work Hours: Mon-Friday 800-430PM



Lynn Burns, Physical Therapist, Outpatient Physical Therapy Supervisor:

Now in her 20th year as a physical therapist, with 17 of those years here at VA Boston Healthcare System. Lynn graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Rice University in English and Human Performance and Health Sciences/Sports Medicine and a Master of Science in PT from Texas Woman's University. After three years at National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, DC, Lynn sat for and passed the Assistive Technology Practitioner exam through the Rehabilitation and Engineering Society of North America. In 2002, Lynn moved into management at VA Boston but was still able to split clinical time between inpatient, outpatient and wheelchair and seating. After 10 years of part time work at the VA, in 2018, Lynn returned to management and full time in her current role. Just this past year, Lynn passed the Geriatric Clinical Specialist exam through American Physical Therapy Association, further enhancing her practice with our Veterans. Lynn came to physical therapy from personal experience with PT as a Division 1 collegiate runner and has truly found a professional home at the VA, where complex patients and opportunities to work with the best clinicians abound. Lynn believes every person can benefit from working with a PT, adding life to our years.

Lynn Burns PT, MSPT Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon-Friday 630-3PM



Anthony Calilung, Lead Inpatient Physical Therapist: Anthony obtained a bachelor's degree in Physical Administration in Boston, Massachusetts. Along with his PT license, he also has an active license as a Registered Nurse and was formerly Board-Certified Clinical Specialist in Geriatrics by the American Physical Therapy Association from 1995-2005. Anthony has worked as a PT in three countries - the Philippines, Canada and currently in the USA, in various clinical settings. He has been a full-time practicing PT for more than 35 years, working at the VA Boston Healthcare System, West Roxbury Campus, for the past 17! His areas of expertise are Acute Care, Evaluating and Treating Complex Medical, Surgical, and Cardiac patients, Acutely Ill patients in the Intensive Care Unit, Acute Rehab, Subacute Rehab, Long Term Care, Home Care, Skilled Nursing Facility, and Geriatrics population. Anthony enjoys serving the Veterans to provide the highest quality of care and excellent customer service. He takes pride working in the VA Boston Rehab Department and always looks forward to going to work because of the dynamic team players and co-workers in the department. His practice in the Philippines, Canada and USA gives him the experience to be culturally sensitive to the diversity in the health care system. Anthony enjoys travel (visited more than 50 countries in the world), dancing, attending fitness class/yoga, and fine dining.

Anthony Calilung PT, MS, RN, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Mon-Friday 730-4PM



Kathryn Foy, Inpatient Physical Therapist: Kathryn initially graduated from Northeastern University in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. After that, she obtained her Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Northeastern University in 2011 and began her career in inpatient rehab. She then dabbled in outpatient therapy, subacute rehab, and long-term acute care settings prior to beginning her VA career. As an Air Force brat, Kathryn always had the desire to work with the military and veteran populations. So, in 2015, she began working at the VA Boston Healthcare System. Since coming to the VA, Kathryn has become a Board-Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist and has obtained her Wound Care Certification.

When not caring for veterans, Kathryn enjoys spending time in Vermont with her husband, Matt, and dog, Larry.

Kathryn Foy PT, DPT, Board Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist, Wound Care Certified
Work Hours: Mon-Friday 800-430PM



Amy Hill, Inpatient Physical Therapist:

Amy has been part of the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation team at the VA Boston Healthcare System for six years. Amy has a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Emory University and has been practicing for 11 years. She works throughout all the inpatient floors including the Spinal Cord Injury rehab unit and CIIRP Acute rehab floor. Amy is a Board-Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist and serves as a mentor and the Didactic Coordinator for the VA Boston Physical Therapy Neurologic Residency Program. Amy is committed to providing each Veteran with the best possible experience and care and is passionate in supporting other Physical Therapists to advance their careers in the area of Neurology.

Amy Hill PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Neurological Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 730-4PM



Heather Jennings, Inpatient Physical Therapist, Spinal Cord Injury Service:

Heather is a Board-Certified Specialist in Neurologic Physical Therapy who provides care for inpatients at West Roxbury Campus. She is committed to a team approach to helping the veterans she serves maintain their highest quality of life and function. She is passionate about educating patients, trainees and staff about the role a physical therapist can play in skillfully reducing pain, promoting function and maintaining independence. She serves as a Mentor to the VA Neurologic PT residency program.

Outside her practice at the VA, Heather serves on the American Physical Therapy Association Board of Directors.

Heather Jennings PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon-Friday 730-4PM



Lincoln Lawrence, Physical Therapist, Aquatic and Outpatient:

Lincoln joined the VA in West Roxbury in August of 2017 as an Aquatic Therapist. As a graduate of The MGH Institute of Health Professions; Lincoln focuses on servicing spinal cord injury, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Outpatient Physical Therapy patients. He and colleague Joe Thilman have increased Physical Therapy services through expansion of Aquatic Physical Therapy and creation of programs such as aquatic conditioning. In addition to his responsibilities as an Aquatic Therapist, Lincoln has worked cross functionally to develop point of care Physical Therapy in the Emergency Department. This initiative has brought physical therapy evaluations to incoming patients, allowing the hospital to better serve and treat Veterans with acute orthopedic conditions, such as low back pain and vertigo. Point of service care has resulted in several instances of reduced admission and reduction in prescription of pain medications. Lincoln has recently been credentialed as a Board-Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist and has completed a Certificate in Aquatic Physical Therapy Competency, both through the American Physical Therapy Association. Lincoln's current practice at the VA in West Roxbury has a focus on neurologic and orthopedic rehabilitation with a special interest in chronic pain. Lincoln founded the Pain Special Interest Group for the American Physical Therapy Association of Massachusetts this year with a goal of educating both patients and clinicians on contemporary pain science. Prior to joining the VA in West Roxbury, Lincoln worked at Spaulding Rehabilitation, Boston University, and Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

Lincoln Lawrence PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon-Friday 800-430PM



Catherine A. Kelly, Physical Therapist, Physical Therapy/Kinesiotherapy Supervisor/Service Line Care Manager for PM&RS:

Catherine has been a Physical Therapist since 2003 and just recently celebrated 15 years of VA Service in August 2019. Catherine has a Master of Science in Physical Therapy from Northeastern University and a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Simmons University. Catherine began her VA career at the Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Hospital/Bedford VA in 2004, providing services across the hospital center - inpatient, outpatient and aquatics areas. Catherine transferred to VA Boston, West Roxbury Campus in 2005. Catherine practiced as an acute care physical therapist and Center Coordinator for Clinical Education until 2008, when she transitioned to a supervisory role for the PT Section. In 2012, Catherine also took on supervisory management of the Kinesiotherapy Section. Catherine has participated in numerous work groups and committees over the years, most notably for the accredited Acute Rehabilitation Program at West Roxbury on Ward A1. The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and has been since 2000. Catherine has served as the Administrative Program Coordinator since 2012 and from this work, Catherine was invited and recently became a surveyor for CARF, the only VA PT surveyor! Just this past year, Catherine passed the Geriatric Clinical Specialist exam through American Physical Therapy Association, further enhancing her practice with Veterans. Catherine spends most of her time in administrative management but does find some clinical time each week to assist with the outpatient Live Long Walk Strong Program and Geriatrics Clinic at West Roxbury.

Catherine A. Kelly PT, DPT, Board-Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist
Physical Therapist Work Hours: Mon-Friday 800-430PM



Bethany McEleney, Inpatient and Outpatient Physical Therapist, Spinal Cord Injury Service: Bethany graduated from Northeastern University in 2013 with a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree and a minor in Spanish. Bethany holds several certifications which include a Board-Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist, a Certified Stroke Rehabilitation Specialist and a LSVT BIG Certified Clinician. Bethany worked as a physical therapist fulltime at New Bridge on the Charles in Dedham for three years and per diem at Spaulding Rehabilitation for five years. Since completing a clinical rotation at the Bethany was accepted as the first Resident for VA Boston's Neurologic PT Residency Program. She completed a yearlong Residency and passed the American Physical Therapy Association Board

Examination to become a Neurologic Clinical Specialist in 2018. Bethany now enjoys working with Veterans both in the inpatient and outpatient settings at the West Roxbury Campus of the VA Boston Healthcare System. She has a special interest in vestibular therapy and offers the LSVT BIG program to veterans with Parkinson's disease. Bethany is a credentialed clinical instructor and is a mentor in the Neurologic PT Residency Program. Veterans, thank you for your service and please remember #ChoosePT!

Bethany McEleney PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Sun-Thu 900-530PM

Greg Meyer, Outpatient Orthopedic Physical Therapist.

Greg just celebrated 21 years of service working for the VA Healthcare System. Greg is a graduate of Northeastern University in 1998 with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy and the University of St. Augustine in 2006 with a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree. He received a Primary Care Certification (PCC) in 2007 under Dr. Stanley Paris and a Certification in Work Capacity Evaluation and Ergonomics through Roy Matheson in 2003. Greg started his career at the VA in West Roxbury working as a cooperative education student in 1995 and 1996. Upon graduation, he was hired by the West Roxbury VA Hospital and worked on the spinal cord injury service before transferring to the James J. Peters VAMC in New York, where he spent approximately 10 more years. While in NY, he developed a Job Analysis and Functional Capacity Evaluation Program, began implementation of direct access for PT, and established PT in one of their community-based outpatient clinics. Greg transferred back to VA Boston, Brockton Campus, in 2007. Since 2007, Greg assisted with service contracts between Brockton primary care physicians and Physical Therapy, completed Leadership Advancement program and “Lean Yellow Belt” training. He was the co-director of PT clinical education program from 2008-2013, expanding our relationship with many local DPT Universities. His more recent accomplishments have focused on his current role in outpatient orthopedics at West Roxbury, where he provides an eclectic evidenced based treatment approach to his veteran patients incorporating his Graston Technique and Dry Needling Certifications. He loves treating podiatric impairments and has fostered the relationship between podiatry and PM&RS. When Greg is not working, he enjoys spending time with his wife Rachel, five children and two dogs, Max and Lolo. He volunteers for the booster’s clubs at his children’s schools organizing funding for varsity baseball and JV field hockey and makes sure he still allows plenty of time to ski, fish and golf throughout the year.

Greg Meyer PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Primary Care Certification
Work Hours: Mon-Fri (varied hours)

***Lee Morris, Inpatient Physical Therapist:***

Lee started her career as a physical therapist at the West Roxbury Campus of VA Boston in 2006 after graduating from Springfield College with a Master of Science in Physical Therapy and a Psychology Minor. She obtained a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Sage Graduate School in 2009. Lee provides care for Veterans in the acute care and acute rehabilitation setting. She strives to make a positive change in veterans’ lives to support lifelong health and wellness and supports this both in the clinical and community setting. Lee is a PSIA-AASI certified Adapted Snowboard Instructor who has worked to get disabled veterans on the mountain side since 2007, both locally and nationally. Lee now functions as part of the On-Mountain Safety Team, overseeing over 100 adapted ski and snowboard instructors, for the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic which hosts about 400 disabled veterans annually. Lee is passionate about taking veterans’ rehabilitation goals from the clinical setting and pushing the limits through adapted sports to achieve what might be considered miracles to some.

Leeann Morris PT, DPT, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 730-4PM



Jayna Rogers, Physical Therapist, Site Coordinator of Clinical Education (SCCE), Residency Program Director:

Jayna has been a physical therapist seeing outpatients at the West Roxbury Campus of the VA Boston Healthcare System for 13 years. Jayna has a Master of Science Degree in Physical Therapy from Northeastern University and a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Simmons University. Jayna has been sharing the role of SCCE for many years and assists with the placement of physical therapy and physical therapy assistant students for all the VA Boston campuses. Jayna enjoys working with new clinical instructors to create a mutually beneficial learning experience for students and staff alike. In addition, Jayna has been in the role of Residency Program Director for the last four years. With the support of the mentoring team, VA Boston Physical Therapy Department has successfully achieved residency program accreditation and graduated three residents in the field of neurologic physical therapy! When not in the education role, Jayna enjoys collaborating with patients to meet their personal goals and customizing a holistic program for each patient that walks in the clinic door.

Jayna Rogers PT, DPT, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Mon, Tue, Thur 6:15 to 2:45PM



Christina Sole-Plasa, Outpatient Physical Therapist, Co-Site Coordinator of Clinical Education (SCCE):

Christina has been a physical therapist at the West Roxbury Campus of the VA Boston Healthcare System for 17 years. Christina obtained her Master of Science in Physical Therapy from Husson University and later returned to complete her Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree. Christina began her career providing both inpatient and outpatient care and developing a keen interest in all aspects of post amputation rehabilitation -with training at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Brooke Army Medical Center. Christina has worked closely with our Amputation Care Clinic Team since 2004 to maximize access to physical therapy following limb loss. Christina is committed to assisting her patients achieve the highest level of function and independence possible and returning to the activities they enjoy. Christina has also served as an adjunct lecturer at MGH Institute of Health Professions, teaching the Physical Therapy prosthetics class for two years. Christina eventually transitioned to providing outpatient care, as well as assisting with coordination of physical therapy student and physical therapy assistant student clinical placements. More recently, Christina also became involved with the VA Boston Employee Ergonomics Program at the West Roxbury Campus, with certification in ergonomics.

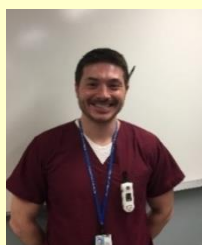
Christina Sole-Plasa PT, DPT, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 630-3PM



Joe Thilman, Physical Therapist, Aquatic and Outpatient:

Joe obtained his Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Boston University in 2015. He began his career as a Hospital-based Outpatient Physical Therapist in Long Island, New York working with Orthopedic and Neurologic patient populations. In 2017 he moved back to Boston to begin his VA career. Since he began working at the VA, Joe has become a Board-Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist and obtained his Certificate in Aquatic Physical Therapy Clinical Competency through the American Physical Therapy Association. Joe's role at the VA began initially by providing almost exclusively aquatic physical therapy care but has since expanded. Over the last two years he and fellow Physical Therapist Lincoln Lawrence have founded an Emergency Department PT program and an Aquatic Conditioning Wellness Program. The Emergency Department PT program was created to improve Veteran access to PT, reduce rate of admissions for musculoskeletal and vestibular conditions, and provide alternatives to prescription pain medications and ordering of diagnostic imaging in the ED setting. The aquatic conditioning wellness program was created in collaboration with the Whole Health Initiative to bridge the gap between one-on-one Physical Therapy care and exercise for general health and wellness.

Joe Thilman PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon-Friday 800-430pm



Jonathan Venne, Inpatient Physical Therapist:

Jon has been a physical therapist at the West Roxbury and Brockton VA campuses for one year, though he began his career working in research at the Jamaica Plain VA. Fresh from undergraduate work at Boston College, Jon spent six years working with veterans as an assistant in the GRECC and TRACTS research programs before transitioning to the physical therapy doctoral program at Boston University. Since graduation in 2015, he has worked at large and small hospitals in both inpatient and outpatient settings but has always kept an eye toward returning to the VA system and giving back to our Veterans. He now works as part of the inpatient consultation team in West Roxbury, and subacute rehab team at the Brockton CLC. His primary areas of interest include acute cardiopulmonary and neurological rehabilitation. Outside of work he enjoys running, hiking, and cajoling his fiancée into watching "old" movies on the couch.

Jonathan Venne PT, DPT, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Sun-Thur 8-430PM

Hai Wei Wang, Inpatient Physical Therapist:



Hai Wei has over 16 years of experience with special interest in geriatrics. She graduated with a Bachelor Science in Exercise Science from Rutgers University and a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Simmons University in 2003. Hai Wei started her career in acute care at Quincy Medical Center for three years followed by four years as a traveling therapist in Massachusetts at various acute rehab and skilled nursing facilities. Since joining the VA in 2010, Hai Wei has been part of the dynamic rehab team and is dedicated to providing comprehensive individualized physical therapy services to all Veterans. In 2011, she was one of the first PTs in the VA Boston Healthcare System to be board certified as a Geriatric Clinical Specialist by the American Physical Therapist Association. She obtained her Certification in Exercise Experts for Aging Adults (CEEAA), in 2015. Hai Wei is a credentialed clinical instructor and has mentored five fulltime physical therapy students. Hai Wei believes that exercise is a vital part of aging well and her favorite way to stay mentally and physically active is through competitive ballroom dancing.

Hai Wei Wang PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist
Certified Exercise Expert for Aging Adults
Work hours: Monday-Friday 730-4PM

Jamaica Plain Campus

***Sarah R. Cleary, Outpatient Vestibular Physical Therapist:***

Sarah celebrated 13 years of dedicated service at VA Boston Healthcare System in March 2019. She is a graduate of Simmons University with a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree. In 2010, she earned a certification from Emory University in Vestibular Rehabilitation and has been participating in the VA Boston Physical Therapy Neurological Residency Program as a clinical mentor. She also works closely with the Polytrauma Team at Jamaica Plain in coordinating care for those who have suffered brain injury. She is dedicated to her patients and works hard to facilitate a means toward meeting their life goals and to optimize outcomes throughout their plan of care and beyond. She is a proud wife, mother of two beautiful daughters and two old pug boys!

Sarah Cleary PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Vestibular Rehabilitation Certified
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 630–3PM

***Danielle Mortorano, Outpatient Physical Therapist, Wheelchair and Seating Therapist:***

Danielle works in the outpatient orthopedic and wheelchair & seating clinics at Jamaica Plain and recently become Board-Certified in Orthopedic Physical Therapy. Danielle became interested in physical therapy while playing Division 1 Rugby at Hamilton College and received her Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from The George Washington University in 2016 - Go Colonials! Danielle was a student and Orthopedic PT Resident at the Washington DC VA where the rehab team's motto was from Dr. Seuss- "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better-it's not!"

Danielle Mortorano PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon-Fri (varied hours)

***Marc Sirrico, Outpatient Physical Therapist:***

This month, Marc celebrated 21 years of dedicated service to our nation's Veterans. Marc is a graduate of Simmons University and Ithaca College. He is a Board Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist and primarily works with Veterans who have orthopedic or polytrauma diagnoses. Marc finds it extremely rewarding to work towards the goal of maximizing the functional abilities of each patient.

Marc Sirrico PT, MSPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist
Work Hours: Mon-Fri (Varied hours)



Randi Woodrow, Physical Therapist, Amputation Rehabilitation Coordinator:

Randi has been a physical therapist for 36 years, 28 with the VA, and 10 at VA Boston. Randi is a graduate of Syracuse University with a Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Services Education, and a graduate of New York University with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy. In 2009, Randi transferred to VA Boston to serve as the Amputation Rehabilitation Coordinator (ARC) for VA Boston and VISN 1 in the Amputation System of Care. As the ARC, she serves as the primary point of care at all VA Boston sites for Veterans who have, or will undergo, amputation. Her responsibilities include coordination of weekly amputee clinic, coordination of monthly amputee support group which reaches Veterans at

West Roxbury, Brockton, Manchester and Togus, training and coordination of amputee peer visitors, facilitating care and education for Veterans prior to amputation, providing education for staff training regarding complications and care for Veterans with limb loss, serving on local, VISN and National VA committees regarding care and prevention of limb loss, and facilitating communication between services which provide care for Veterans with, or at risk for, limb loss. She is a strong advocate for adaptive sports and has been volunteering in adaptive winter and summer sports on the local and national levels for several decades. When she moved to Boston from Los Angeles, she brought the adaptive surf program for Veterans with disabilities that she started at the VA in LA, and although relatively small, the VA Boston adaptive surf program is one of the largest and most consistent in the country.

On Sundays (not in the summer!), she and her dog Boomer provide Pet Therapy visits to Veterans in West Roxbury on Wards A1 and A2.



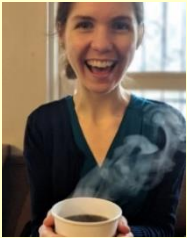
Randi Woodrow PT, BSPT, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 730-4PM

Brockton Campus

Jennifer DeSalvo, Outpatient Physical Therapist, Wheelchair and Seating Therapist:

Jen has worked for VA Boston Healthcare System since graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy from Northeastern University in 1995. She began her PT career at the West Roxbury Campus and then transferred to the Brockton Campus in 2002. Jen furthered her education, receiving a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from MGH Institute of Health Professions, in 2012. She currently treats veterans in the outpatient clinic and in the Wheelchair and Seating clinic in Brockton. Jen is certified in the Graston Technique and the Selective Functional Movement Assessment (SFMA). When not at work, Jen is busy with her two kids, two dogs and cat and rooting for all of the Boston sports teams. Go PATS!

Jen DeSalvo PT, DPT, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Mon-Thu 700-530PM

***Erika Gonzalez, Inpatient Physical Therapist:***

Erika graduated with a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree in May 2019 from Georgia State University and recently moved to the Boston area to work as an inpatient physical therapist at the Brockton campus. She had an older brother with multiple disabilities who inspired her to pursue a career in which she can help other people who face physical impairments. She is currently working with the chronic spinal cord injury and inpatient psychiatric Veteran populations and she remembers her rotation with orthopedic trauma acute care in Atlanta, Georgia as a PT student as an impactful experience. In her free time, Erika enjoys hiking and traveling with her husband.

Erika Gonzalez PT, DPT, Physical Therapist
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 800-430PM

***Lindsay Lefers, Inpatient Physical Therapist, Community Living Center:***

Lindsay obtained her Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Grand Valley State University in 2011 and subsequently moved from Michigan to Boston to begin her career in subacute rehab and long-term care in a community skilled nursing facility. She began her VA career in 2012 as an inpatient PT for the Brockton Community Living Center (CLC). Since coming to the VA, Lindsay has become a Board-Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist and Certified Exercise Expert for Aging Adults. She enjoys being a part of the CLC team, participating in Cultural Change Committee, interprofessional training, and Whole Health initiatives. When not at work, Lindsay enjoys the heartbreak of Detroit Lions football and spending time with her husband, daughter and two dogs, Harvey and Harper.

Lindsay Lefers PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Board-Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist
Certified Exercise Expert for Aging Adults
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 800-430PM



Michelle Maruca, Physical Therapist, Float for West Roxbury and Brockton Campuses:

Michelle attended Northeastern University where she graduated with a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree in 2010. After college, she started her career in Bakersfield, CA working at an inpatient acute rehab facility for about three years. While living out in California, she met her husband Peter, who was stationed at a small Marine corps base in the city for Inspector and Instructor duty. After about six months of knowing each other, her husband got orders to transfer to Camp Lejeune on the coast of North Carolina and she decided to go with him! It was during that time that she really started to become immersed in the military community and develop a fond appreciation for all veterans. While in North Carolina, Michelle worked at a skilled nursing facility for four years. Michelle's husband decided that he no longer wanted to serve in the Marine Corps on active duty and switched to reserve status which gave them the freedom to choose where we wanted to live. Michelle was ready to move back to Boston and came across the opportunity to work for VA Boston, where she has now been happily employed for the last two years! Michelle spends most of her time at the Brockton Campus floating between inpatient and outpatient, but you'll sometimes see her in West Roxbury helping when needed! In her spare time, she enjoys traveling and doing yoga in which she recently became a certified instructor in May of 2019!

Michelle Maruca PT, DPT , Physical Therapist, Registered Yoga Teacher
Work Hours: Mon-Fri 800-430PM



Jessica Rawlins-Roy, Inpatient Lead Physical Therapist, Community Living Center:

Jess started her VA career in 2010, after being a traveling physical therapist in various settings across the country. Currently, she practices in the Brockton Community Living Center (CLC) where she finds joy in watching veterans thrive and is privileged to provide them with a multitude of evidence-based interdisciplinary team, whom teaches and engages veterans to be active participants in their health and wellbeing and offers them various "whole health" information and activities to improve their quality of life. Jess is honored to work with veterans and serve those whom have served our country. Inspired each day by her co-workers and the interdisciplinary collaboration at the CLC, she has found her professional home and wants to continue to make an impact in the lives of veterans, their families, and our VA system. Jess enjoys teaching indoor cycling to employees, aromatherapy, traveling, and spending time with her family and friends. "TOGETHERNESS: Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success-Henry Ford" #CHOOSEPT

Jessica Rawlins-Roy PT, DPT, Physical Therapist, Certified Exercise Expert for Aging Adults
Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist, Certified Spin Instructor
Work Hours: Mon-Fri (varied hours)

Awards and Achievements

We would like to recognize three of our PMRS staff for their many years of service to the VA:

Catherine Kelly just celebrated 15 years of VA Service!

Diane Giles just celebrated 40 years of VA Service!

Krysta Kingsbury just celebrated 15 years of VA Service!

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication in giving back to the service but most importantly the Veterans.



**Veteran Outcomes for the Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Program
West Roxbury Campus, Unit A-1
October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019**

Demographics

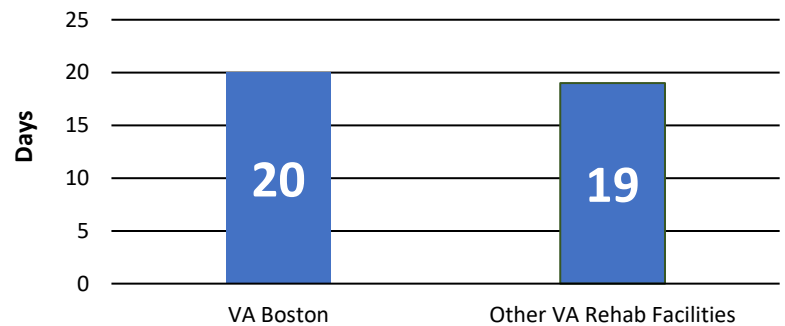
Total Persons Served:	63
Veterans	
Average Age:	69
years	
Gender:	Male 94%
	Female 6%

Diagnoses Treated

Stroke	18 (28%)
Brain Dysfunction	6 (9%)
Neurological	6 (9%)
Amputation of Limb	15 (25%)
Arthritis	1 (2%)
Pain	2 (3%)
Orthopedic	5 (8%)
Medically Complex	7 (11%)
Debility	1 (2%)

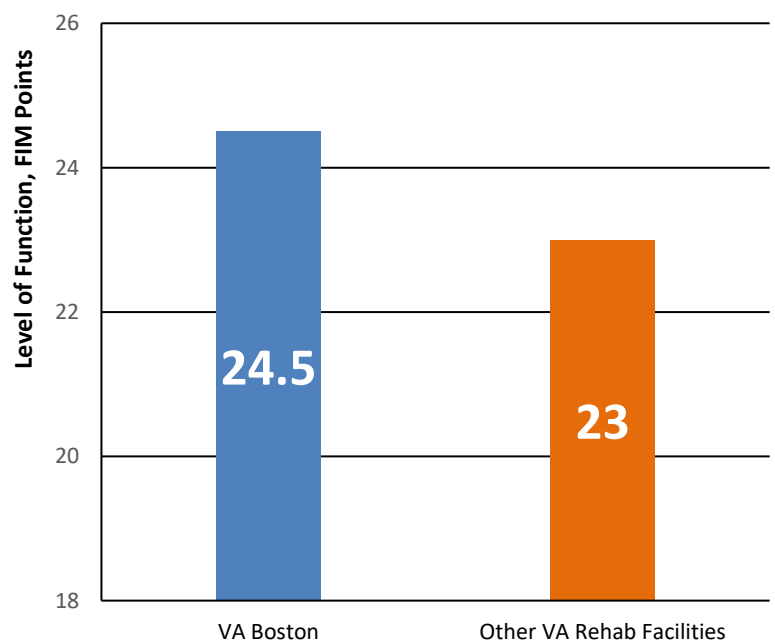
Length of Stay

VA Boston Veterans had an average length of stay that was 1 day longer than other VA Rehab Facilities.



Level of Function

VA Boston Veterans gained more independence in mobility and activities of daily living than Veterans in other VA Rehab Facilities.



**Veteran Outcomes for the Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Program
West Roxbury Campus, Unit A-1
October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019 (cont.)**

**Post Discharge Veteran
Satisfaction Survey**

Overall Customer Satisfaction:

100% respondents satisfied with services.

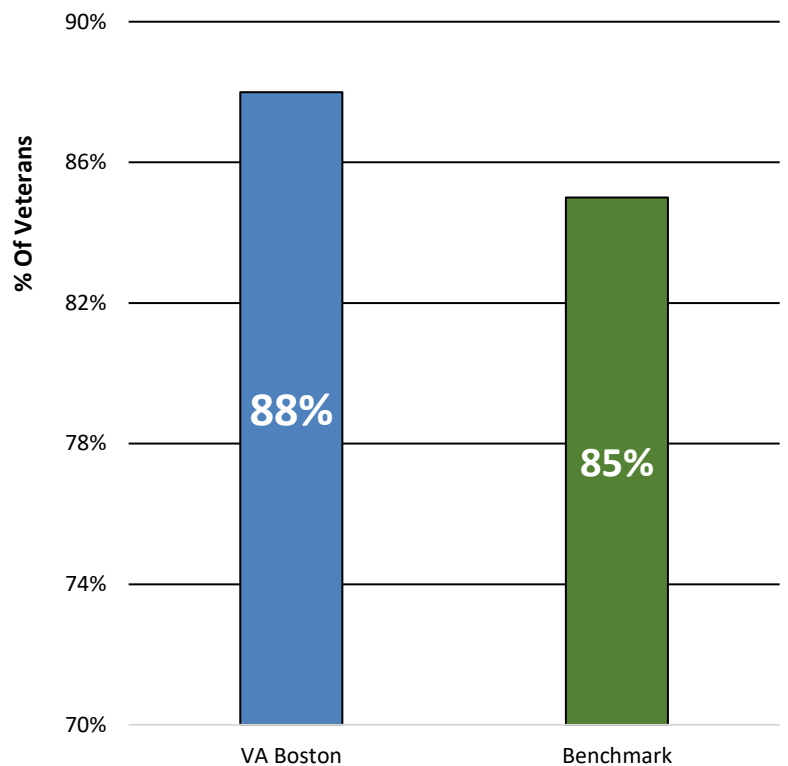
- I was involved with decision making during my rehab stay
90%
- The rehabilitation program prepared me for going home.
98%
- The progress I made in rehab met my expectations.
92%
- The rehabilitation program improved my quality of life.
92%
- If you needed rehab again, would you return to our facility
98%

Discharge Destination

Home/Community	48 (76%)
Sub-Acute Rehab Setting	12 (19%)
Transfer to Acute Care	
Unplanned	2 (3%)
Inpatient Hospice	1 (2%)
Long Term Care	0
Expired	0

Durability of Gains made on Our Rehab Unit

88% of our Veterans maintained (or improved) on their gains made during their rehab stay. Veterans that lost mobility are actively followed in outpatient rehabilitation clinics.



Neurologic Physical Therapy Residency Program



Good Bye Lindsay

Good Luck!

It is with excitement and a little bit of sadness we say goodbye to our 2019 graduating physical therapy resident Lindsay Beatty. Throughout the last twelve months, Lindsay has shown great growth in professionalism and clinical skills and did a wonderful job taking care of our veterans, specifically those with neurologic conditions. Lindsay plans to begin a new adventure on the west coast in Portland, Oregon in early 2020.



Hello Megan

Welcome!

The Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department is proud to welcome Megan Cohea PT, DPT as our 2019-2020 resident in the Neurologic Physical Therapy Residency Program. Megan is a recently graduated Physical Therapist from Tennessee State University in Nashville. Initially from the Midwest (Iowa), Megan is still adjusting to the traffic, Boston accent, and plethora of quality sports teams within the area.

Megan is excited to join the knowledgeable VA Boston Healthcare System team to grow her clinical expertise to provide the highest quality of patient care. Her energy and passion for clinical excellence is driven by the emotional moments when patients light up with joy after acquiring a new skill.

She wholeheartedly believes that with hard work it is never too late to learn a new trick.

Throughout her residency, Megan will collaborate with mentors to experience the full spectrum VA Boston has to offer in the neurology field. She will participate in Physical Medicine Rehabilitation services within inpatient, outpatient, CIIRP, and acute care units.

Outside of Physical Therapy, Megan continues to thrive on challenge and exhilarating experiences.

She enjoys participating in running races, hiking, chasing waterfalls, and the occasional visit to an amusement park (for the roller coasters of course). We are excited to welcome Megan to our family and foster her energy to grow as a clinician!